Abstract of the Disclosure

As is known in the art, it becomes progressively difficult to identify an image region as being caused by noise as the area of that image region increases. The present invention encompasses the discovery that image data associated with smaller noise regions tends to mirror image data associated with larger noise regions. In accordance with the present invention, known techniques are used to accurately identify smaller noise regions. The image data extracted from these smaller noise regions is then used to aid in the identification of larger noise regions. Accordingly, the present invention increases the area of noise regions capable of being accurately identified compared to prior art noise identification techniques. Once large and small noise regions have been identified, the noise regions can be filtered using techniques known in the art.